

# THE SPRESS

November 21, 2025

\* MUSIC CATALOG

\* CREATIVE WRITING

\* MEDITATION

## In perfect harmony

Cassie Oxford



The sopranos singing during the Pops Concert

Every voice matters, which is why Concert Choir is an ideal class for students to let their voices be heard, both individually and, most importantly, as a whole. Choir is all about unity, so being able to sing as part of a group and bring the harmonies to life is a beautiful experience that not many people get to have because they are either nervous about joining choir or have no idea that South Park even has one.

There are currently 22 students in Concert Choir this year, and each student has their own unique voice that contributes to the choir in different ways. Choir isn't just about singing – it's about making connections with people who share the same talents as you. You don't necessarily have to be good at singing to join a choir. As long as you have a passion for music and strive for musical growth and improvement, Concert Choir is the best fit for you.

Kennedy Salvino, senior, has been in choir since 5th grade and joined choir because she has “always loved singing.” There are so many great singers out there who may love to sing on their own but never find a group of other singers to share the beauty and excitement when it comes to music. That is why being a part of a group is so important. Not only does it improve your vocal skills, but it also provides you with connections that can build you up.

Keira Mitchell, senior, stated that her favorite things about choir are “singing and having fun” with her friends. While music consists of vocal harmonies, the choir itself establishes social harmonies. The friends you make in groups such as a choir are the people you remember and appreciate most in high school. Bailey Vietmeier, senior, says that she enjoys “Christmas caroling for the old folks,” which is done every year in December. The choir goes on a caroling field trip during the school day, visiting the elementary school, Paramount, and then the mall to eat lunch and hang out. The trip is a great opportunity to spread Christmas cheer while also making stronger connections with peers.

While the choir comprises students with their own unique voices, it features both upbeat and slow songs that bring the unity of their voices to life, as well as establishes different techniques that provide vocal variety. Salvino prefers slower songs because it is easier to “hear the different sections more.” Whether you're a soprano, alto, or bass, each voice part plays its own role in every song, and slower songs tend to bring the harmonies of those different parts to life. Vietmeier, however,  
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## In perfect harmony (con't)

Cassie Oxford

prefers more upbeat songs because “you can hear every mistake” with slower songs. Because slower songs capture the beauty of harmonies, the audience focuses more on how they sound, so it is easier for them to pick out parts that may not sound as great. However, even if mistakes are made, the only way to move forward from them is up.

Each member of the choir would encourage others to join for various reasons. Mitchell stated that “it is very beneficial to take music classes” and “it’s fun to learn what contributes to music.” Music is more than just notes on paper. There’s a lot that goes into music, and a significant part of it is the talented musicians who work hard to create a sound that is appealing to others.

If you love to sing and are looking for a community, Concert Choir is the perfect fit for you. The choir could always use more members, because the bigger the choir, the better the performances sound. If you are interested in joining the choir, look for Choir Sectional in Flex to join during RISE and check it out.

## Extra sleep method

Kolby Kostelnik

Are you really getting enough sleep at night? A small amount of sleep can make you start off your day in a bad mood. You could say “just drink caffeine,” but it’s just not good for you. Caffeine may cause dehydration, anxiety, jitteriness, and insomnia. If you need ways to be less tired in the mornings, I have a method just for you.

Students were asked the same questions about their sleep. Branden Knapp, freshman, says he gets about seven hours of sleep every night. Knapp says he tries to fall asleep around 10:30 every night. He may stay awake longer than 10:30 because he has “too much energy”. If he is ever tired, he just accepts it and tries to fight it.

Jake Hawranko and Logan Hoover, both freshmen, say they get about eight hours of sleep every night because they both fall asleep at a reasonable hour. Both Hoover and Hawranko say they stay up too late sometimes because they are on their phones. However, they differ because while Hawranko doesn’t do anything to combat his tiredness, Hoover takes naps to combat his.

In all of those interviews, we only had one person who tries to combat their tiredness, but even on a school day if you’re tired in the morning, you don’t have time for a nap. This is where the extra sleep method comes into play. The extra sleep method is where you set an alarm sometime during the night to wake you up. You will wake up at this hour thinking you have to get ready for

## IMPORTANT DATES

**November 19: NHS induction ceremony**

**November 26: Dodgeball tournament**

**November 26: Early dismissal**

**November 27-December 1: No school**

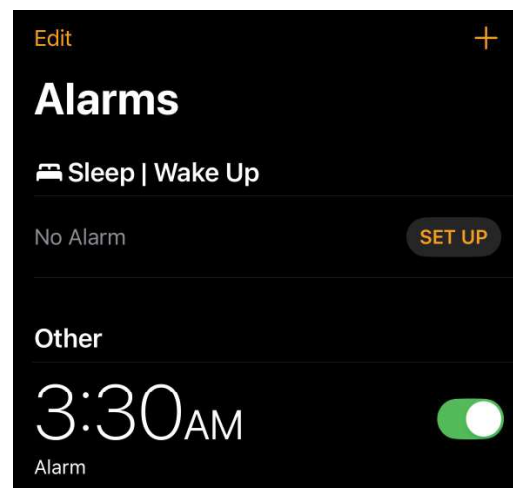
**December 8: Small ensemble concert**

**December 16: Band concert**

**December 23: Festivus**

**December 23: Early dismissal**

**December 24-January 5: No school**



## Extra sleep method (con't)

Kolby Kostelnik

school, but you really don't have to. Then you turn the alarm off and fall back asleep. This only works well if you can fall asleep easily. This is supposed to trick your mind into thinking that you've had extra sleep when you really just had the same amount.

I only use this method when I know I stayed up too late that night, but I notice such a huge difference in my mood when I use it. Something about me is that if the beginning of my day is bad, then the rest of it will be. With this method, I wake up not tired at all and happy. This gets my day off to a hot start and makes it a great day.

If you're always tired in the morning, give this method a try, and maybe you'll feel like a million bucks when you wake up.

## Lack of study halls

Devin Kelly

Are you struggling to keep your grades up now that you don't have a study hall? Probably. But why? Is it because of not having study halls to do work or do you just not have time to do the work?

Last school year most students had a study hall period in their everyday schedule for 45 minutes a day and now students rarely are able to get a 30 minutes study hall for one day out of the week. There are only two study halls per RISE period with 25 seats max per study hall. Since the study halls fill up quickly, many of the students don't get study halls but most of those students that do sign up in time for study halls most sign up for study halls for the entire week at the beginning of the week.

Last year most students had a study hall period all year. For 45 minutes a day, some students did missing work and work due a couple days. However, the lack of study halls affects students because when they're missing work they have to try getting it done in their free time. But some students either always forget or just don't do it which

## The art of writing

Jeremy Oxford

Have you ever sat down and pondered what to even write about? Creative writing comes easy to some, and when it does, those writers have the best imaginations and can write what their hearts tell them.

Creative writing by definition is "writing, typically fiction or poetry, which displays imagination or invention (often contrasted with academic or journalistic writing)." So, why do people decide to write for fun? Is it to encourage analytical thinking and enhance writing skills, or is it to express emotion and imagination? There are many benefits to creative writing, whether you are writing a poem or a short story. Being able to write gives the writer a sense of comfort and clearer thinking.

A lot of people don't know how to "be creative", but there are many skills and techniques to learn to  
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makes their grades suffer. If more study halls were offered students wouldn't be in this situation.

A group of students were asked questions about the lack of study halls and they all said the lack of study halls doesn't give enough time to do work in school. Every student said it should be a class period during the school day and not just during RISE. One student said "study hall was very good for me back then, because I would have time to calm down or if I didn't have time to do something at home or didn't get to finish, I would have study hall to finish." While study halls are offered during RISE, one student said "kids would rather take fun classes during RISE with friends."

Only about half the students polled said they were stressed without having a study hall. However, with study halls filling up fast, adding study halls to the everyday schedule would help students feel less stressed and be more productive. Hopefully this is something that can be changed in the future.

## Addi's music catalog: WOW!

Addi Yochum



The iconic indie-pop, sister-brother duo, BETWEEN FRIENDS, dropped their 4th album, "WOW!", in August 2025, and I've had it on repeat since. This album is somewhat different from their past ones, since it is more experimental and synth-based.

Before "WOW!", they released "I Love My Girl, She's My Boy," in 2023 and this album had, at least I think, a whole different vibe. That album's genre was more R&B and 90's inspired with features from artists like Teezo Touchdown on "Redlight," and EDEN on "Bb."

WOW! opens with "You & Me Time," and transitions to "BLOW." Both introduce us to the unique sound the album has. It continues with songs like "Parking lot," "1234567," and "JAM!", the most popular on the album. The album ends with "Chevron," and "Jackie." They had released "XD," as a single in June, and one other song in February.

BETWEEN FRIENDS is currently on their U.S. and Europe tour and Savannah Hudson, the main vocalist, shared her vision of this album perfectly. She wears abstract outfits, layered with lace and neon colors, and her stage presence is so feminine and authentic to her and the music. They totally displayed the boiler-room, "dance club" vibe the music gives. Brandon and Savannah Hudson, the siblings behind BETWEEN FRIENDS describe this album as a "mid-twenty's existential crisis while having the times of our lives."

If you're looking for the perfect album to blast in your car, or dance in your room to, "WOW!" is it.

## Relax, reflect, reset

Adriana McDonald

Shut the door. Turn off the lights. Put AirPods in. Relax.

Meditation is extremely beneficial with all the stress put on individuals today. Sometimes just telling yourself it's going to be okay helps. Meditation is not only a source of relaxation it can reduce anxiety and stress, which then leads to a better mood and increased productivity as well as focus and ultimately a better lifestyle.

One style of meditation that is beneficial is Affirmation Meditation. Affirmation Meditation creates an environment where you can appreciate yourself and find that you are perfect just where you are based on focusing on your breathing and positive affirmations. It also helps increase creativity, improve emotional regulation, and create more of an understanding of your surroundings to help you become aware of yours and others well-being.

Stress is everywhere, no matter if it's at school, home, or even at work. Students are stressed about homework, sports, tests, clubs, and activities outside of school just to name a few. But students aren't the only ones who are stressed, are they? Teachers have so many things on their plate as well, it may be running a club or grading essays, and even just teaching a class. Students and teachers alike need something to help relieve them of this overwhelming stress that most certainly is making tears push at the back of their eyes. Wouldn't it be nice to have a meditation resource at school? In elementary and middle school, we had the Chill Room, yes. But, is it just common sense that when we grow up we have to keep all of our emotions bottled up inside? We can't have a place to relax and take a deep breath? Even though we are young adults does not mean we shouldn't have these same resources that are necessary for our well-being. Meditation can be a great source of relaxation and destressing if we are given the opportunity when we need it.

Meditating does not only help emotionally, it helps physically too. It can lower blood pressure, improve pain management, boost the immune system, and reduce risk of chronic disease. Meditation is an amazing resource to use when feeling stressed or overwhelmed, so if you're feel-

## Relax, reflect, reset (con't)

Adriana McDonald

ing stressed or overwhelmed, use your resources.

The benefits of those twenty minutes of meditation greatly outweigh the harm of the stress that could accumulate over the years. There is not a better time than now. Just shut the door, turn off the lights, put those airpods in, and relax.



## The art of writing (con't)

Jeremy Oxford

become a creative writer. The major skill to learn is imagination. Imagination lets your mind present mental images for you to create original ideas for your writing. One technique for creative writing is being able to use literary devices in your writing to make it come alive and express more emotion. Creative writing takes time and dedication to become an accomplished writer.

There are many different reasons why people love to write. Xavier Haduch, sophomore, says creative writing allows him to “express [himself] through words.” He also says it allows him to “create a world of my imagination.” Using your imagination and being able to express your emotions on paper will help your writing excel. Andrea Stoyanova, junior, says she mainly writes “dramas with serious topics but also comedies,” along with most of what she writes down “does come from dreams [she has].” There are numerous ways of getting inspiration for ideas to write about, and that’s the beauty of it. Stoyanova attended the Point Park Steel City Film Fest and received a \$2000 scholarship to their school. The name of her short film was “Glitter is a girl’s best friend.” So there are not only personal benefits to creative writing, but also tangible things like earning money off of your writing and also having the chance to sell your works.

From personal experience, I’m creating my own poetry book from all the poems I’ve written. Making a book allows me to share my experience in writing and shows how I express myself on paper. Not only does publishing a poetry book allow me to express myself, but it also opens myself up to the world for people who read it.

Whether it’s poetry or prose, creative writing is for everyone if you desire to put the time and effort into it. Let your mind roam and heart write because you never know what story lies behind yourself.

**The art of writing (con't)**

Poem by Jeremy Oxford

the petals fall,  
and a wandering wind blows.  
leaves crinkle softly at my feet.  
i walk to a bench and take a seat.

i inhale the cold air deep into my lungs,  
and exhale the weight i've carried for years.  
the sky wraps around me in a gentle haze;  
hours drift by-i've been writing for days.

memories linger like a fog in my mind,  
soft shadows of what-ifs entwined in echoes.  
they whisper of dreams i once laid to rest,  
and stir the longing deep within my chest.

i close my book with the words inside,  
the ink still wet and my mind finally still.  
can the heart recall what the mind forgets,  
or do the moments fade into quiet regrets?

